

PREFACE

Mountains exist in almost every country in the world and almost every war has included some type of mountain operations. This pattern will not change; therefore, soldiers will fight in mountainous terrain in future conflicts. Although mountain operations have not changed, several advancements in equipment and transportation have increased the soldiers' capabilities. The helicopter now allows access to terrain that was once unreachable or could be reached only by slow methodical climbing. Inclement weather, however, may place various restrictions on the capabilities of air assets available to a commander. The unit must then possess the necessary mountaineering skills to overcome adverse terrain to reach an objective.

This field manual details techniques soldiers and leaders must know to cope with mountainous terrain. These techniques are the foundation upon which the mountaineer must build. They must be applied to the various situations encountered to include river crossings, glaciers, snow-covered mountains, ice climbing, rock climbing, and urban vertical environments. The degree to which this training is applied must be varied to conform to known enemy doctrine, tactics, and actions. This FM also discusses basic and advanced techniques to include acclimatization, illness and injury, equipment, anchors, evacuation, movement on glaciers, and training.

This field manual is a training aid for use by *qualified* personnel in conjunction with FM 3-97.6, Mountain Operations, which is used for planning operations in mountainous terrain. Personnel using FM 3-97.61 should attend a recognized Department of Defense Mountain Warfare School for proper training. **Improper use of techniques and procedures by untrained personnel may result in serious injury or death.** Personnel should be certified as Level I, Basic Mountaineer; Level II, Assault Climber; or Level III, Mountain Leader before using FM 3-97.61 for training (see Appendix A).

The measurements in this manual are stated as they are used in training (either metric or standard). Appendix B contains a measurement conversion chart for your convenience.

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Unless otherwise stated, whenever the masculine gender is used, both men and women are included.